

# LIVING FAITH

## SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

APRIL 12



### THE GOSPEL FOR TODAY -- John 20:19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

### REFLECTING ON THE GOSPEL

Thomas has been known down through the ages as "Doubting Thomas." He was not there when the other Apostles saw the risen Jesus, touched him, and heard him speak to them.

In a way, you and I, the modern-day-disciples of Jesus, are like Thomas. We have not seen, but we are called to believe. Jesus addresses the same words to us as to Thomas: "Do not doubt but believe."

Sometimes believing can be hard. We see unjust wars, or hungry children, or violence or prejudice seeming to get the upper hand, and we might be tempted to think, "If there really is a God, why doesn't God do something about that?" Or we might say, "I pray, but God doesn't seem to hear my prayer because nothing happens." Pope Francis has a thoughtful response: "You pray for the hungry; then you feed them. That's how prayer works."

### TALKING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- How did you come to believe in Jesus?
- Why do you think people doubt the existence of God or of Jesus?
- What keeps you going when you are tempted to doubt?

# Jesus Appears to His Disciples



Complete the paragraph by filling in the blanks with the correct words from the word bank at the bottom of the story.

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, \_\_\_\_\_ came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Now \_\_\_\_\_, one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the \_\_\_\_\_ marks in his hands and put my \_\_\_\_\_ where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not \_\_\_\_\_ it."

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were \_\_\_\_\_, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop \_\_\_\_\_ and believe."

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

John 20:19-28 (NIV)

believe	finger	jesus	nail	side
doubting	hands	locked	seen	Thomas

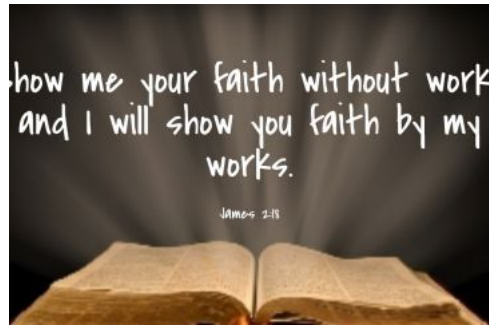
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# THE CHURCH TEACHES WHAT IS FAITH?

Faith the response that each person makes to the invitation of God, an invitation into a relationship of love. (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 142)



To obey (from the Latin *ob-audire*, to "hear or listen to") in faith is to submit freely to the word that has been heard, because its truth is guaranteed by God, who is Truth itself...The Virgin Mary is its most perfect embodiment. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 144)

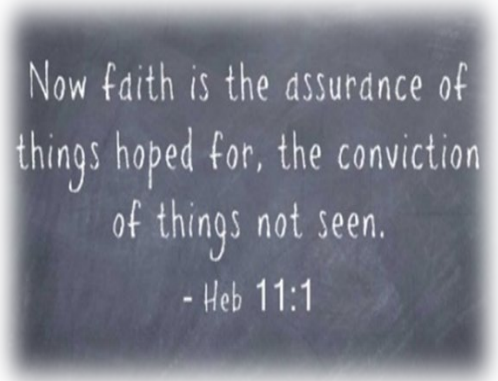


WHAT ABOUT YOU...?

IF FAITH COMES FROM WHAT IS HEARD... WHEN AND HOW HAVE YOU HEARD THE VOICE OF GOD?

HOW HAS GOD INVITED YOU INTO A RELATIONSHIP?

WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE? HOW DO YOU RESPOND?



"Faith is taking the first step, even when you don't see the whole staircase." Martin Luther King

"Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe." St. Augustine

## Trust in the Lord



WHAT ABOUT YOU?  
What is "faith"?

## DID YOU KNOW?

- EASTER IS CALLED “THE GREAT SUNDAY”
- THE SEASON OF EASTER LASTS FOR 50 DAYS



**The Paschal Candle**  
is the central symbol of the Easter season, sign of the presence of the risen Lord, light of the world

*Alleluia!*  
Praise the Lord!  
THE SONG OF OUR REJOICING

It is added to acclamations and antiphons and may be used as a refrain for the Responsorial Psalm and Communion Song.



The sprinkling rite (with water blessed at the Easter Vigil) is often used at the beginning of Masses on Sundays

## ASPECTS OF THE SEASON OF EASTER

As far back as the Council of Nicaea (325), the Church reflected Easter joy by prohibiting fasting and kneeling, which are signs of penance, throughout the season.

During the Easter season, we stand (rather than kneel) during the Litany of the Saints.



Confirmation and First Eucharist are celebrated during the Easter season



The constant joy of the season continues throughout the **fifty days** and should be reflected in the festive decoration of the church building



**The Acts of the Apostles** is read at all celebrations in place of the Old Testament because it presents the life, growth and witness of the early Church



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### A Prayer After Easter

By Erin M. Cline

O God of the Last Supper  
God of the Cross  
And God of the Empty Tomb  
We come before you now and we pause.

We inhale the scent of snow white Easter lilies.  
We see the rain as it falls in veils and sheets of April showers.  
And we listen.

Holy Week has passed.  
But how we long to live by the marvelous story we have heard.

Let us remain ever beside you at the table of the Last Supper.  
Show us who is hungry.  
And give us the courage to offer them bread from your table.  
Show us who is thirsty.  
And give us the strength to lift up the cup of your love.

Most of all, show us how to linger at the table, serving others—  
Doing ALL that we do  
In remembrance of You,  
And the way You were when You walked this earth.

We lift these simple, limited words  
Up to you, O God.

Amen

